

COUNTY: CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** TEN WOOD

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Local Planning Authorities: East Cambridgeshire District Council

National Grid Reference: TL 664558

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 154 **1:10,000:** TL 65 NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1971 **Date of Last Revision:**

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1983 **Date of Last Revision:**

Area: 17 ha 42 ac

Description and Reasons for Notification

This is an ancient woodland of the ash-maple type which has a national distribution restricted to lowland England. Since 1945 such woodland examples have declined in extent, particularly in the more intensively farmed regions and the fraction which remain are therefore of high conservation value.

In a Cambridgeshire context, Ten Wood is additionally noted for the influence on its vegetation of underlying acid sand and gravels in an otherwise extended area of Chalky Boulder Clay. It is also one of the few woods where hornbeam *Carpinus betula* is represented, here being at the northern edge of its range in Britain. The wood also supports an oxlip *Primula elatior* population; a plant which is confined to a small number of woods in eastern England.

The dominant tree species of the wood are ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, field maple *Acer campestre*, hazel *Coryllus avellana* and pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*. The ash, maple and hazel occur largely as coppice and the oak and some ash as standards. This structure results from a 'coppice with standards' management, the traditional management dating back to the Middle Ages. Other tree species include aspen *Populus tremula* and willow *Salix caprea*.

The rich ground flora includes bluebell *Endymion non-scriptus*, dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, ramsons *Allium ursinum*, wood sorrel *Oxalis acetosella* and water avens *Geum rivale*. The wood is also noted as providing the only record of the woodrush *Luzula sylvatica* within the old county of Cambridgeshire. The rides, supporting a grassland flora, add further diversity to the site.

Parts of the wood have suffered in the past from attempts at coniferisation. This has largely failed and management now is towards the more compatible coppice structure. These areas are therefore retained within the boundary of the designated site.